

Friis, John

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From: Olivia C. Snyder-Spak [Olivia.C.Snyder-Spak@Dartmouth.edu]  
Sent: Friday, March 13, 2009 7:17 PM  
To: Friis, John  
Subject: ECA Voting

Dear Mr. Friis,

I recently heard about the vote in the General Assembly this week. As an ECA theater alumnus from Amity Regional High School, both issues being voted on are of direct concern to me. Amity is one district that has limited or no funding for students to attend ECA. Had this bill been enacted when I was in high school, I cannot impress the extent to which it would have affected my high school experience as well as the path my life has taken since. Through ECA, I got my first introduction to script-writing and, tangentially, to film. I am currently a film major at Dartmouth College and have won three different awards for my scriptwriting. Having the experience of working with a professional scriptwriter in high school not only helped me decide what I wanted to pursue in college and life, it gave me a significant advantage working in the field.

One of the biggest benefits of ECA are the working professionals who guest teach for a semester or a term. Very few high schools nationwide are able to bring in the caliber of guest teachers ECA routinely gets. At Dartmouth, I've regularly applied skills and knowledge in my courses, none of which have been theater courses. Skills I've learned in Voice and Speech, Butoh, Michael Chekov Technique, Script-writing, and Theater for Social Change, all courses I believe were taught by uncertified teachers, have directly overlapped with my college Linguistics, Art History, Comparative Literature, Screenwriting, and Spanish Literature courses.

I sincerely believe that limiting or altering the way that ECA is run would be a detriment to the community and all of the future students who will have missed out on such a great experience.

Thank you,  
Olivia Snyder-Spak  
ECA 2006